



White River RMP Oil and Gas Amendment FACT SHEET: Big Game

Big game and other wildlife are an important resource in the White River Field Office. The RMP Amendment offers significant protections and mitigations for wildlife (Tables 2-4 through 2-9):

- Providing operators key incentives to protect large blocks of undeveloped wildlife habitat on their leases in Alternatives B and C
- Clustering development to significantly reduce disturbance
- Using timing limitations and other protections either as a lease stipulation or at the time of permitting
- Incorporating a detailed reclamation plan (Appendix D) common to all alternatives
- Protecting State Wildlife Areas with underlying Federal minerals with a No Surface Occupancy stipulation under Alternatives B (18,900 acres) and C (18,200 acres)

Year-round drilling and timing limitation exceptions

BLM's traditional use of timing limitations has been very successful in reducing impacts to wildlife, but new technologies are providing new opportunities to better protect wildlife and wildlife habitat.

Clustering development on multi-well pads is highly desirable because it greatly reduces the amount of disturbance to wildlife, but typically operators cannot drill all the wells on a multi-well pad in the time allowed under timing limitations.

Timing limitations can extend development timeframes in any given area by an estimated 50 percent, and triple heavy vehicle traffic associated with rig moves.

Under Alternatives B and C, exceptions to timing limitations would be offered if operators kept disturbance within defined thresholds for their leases, including not only the actual acres of surface disturbance, but also a buffer around the disturbance. This would encourage the lowest amount of surface disturbance and prompt reclamation – once lands meet successful interim standards, they would not be included in the threshold totals.

Timing limitations and thresholds for exceptions

	Alternative B	Alternative C
Timing Limitations – All areas within the Field Office are covered by timing limitations, which are either stipulations on the lease, or would be applied as a Condition of Approval (COA) during the permitting phase	Timing limitations would be applied through lease stipulations or as COAs that could extend up to 120 days within the following windows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 1 through April 30 in defined big game severe winter range, severe winter range/winter concentration areas, and winter concentration areas. May 15 through August 15 in defined big game summer range. Defined big game winter range: deferrals of up to 90 days 	Timing limitations would be applied through lease stipulations or as COAs that could extend up to 90 days within the following windows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> January 1 through April 30 in defined big game severe winter range and severe winter range/winter concentration areas. May 15 through August 15 in defined big game summer range. Defined big game winter range and winter concentration areas: deferrals of up to 60 days
Acute Thresholds –To receive an exception to timing limitations, leaseholders could not exceed these percentages of acreage on all their leases within a specific Game Management Unit for intensive activities like construction, drilling and completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 percent of deer winter range. 10 percent of deer severe winter range. 10 percent of deer summer range. 10 percent of deer winter concentration area. 5 percent of deer severe winter range/winter concentration area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 percent of deer winter range. 25 percent of deer severe winter range. 25 percent of deer summer range. 25 percent of deer winter concentration area. 10 percent of deer severe winter range/winter concentration area
Collective Thresholds – To receive an exception to timing limitations, leaseholders cannot exceed these percentages of the total acreage of all their leases within a specific Game Management Unit for both the acute thresholds above along with incomplete lease development activities such as areas not meeting interim reclamation standards, multiple well pads awaiting further drilling, areas receiving frequent visitation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 percent of deer winter range. 20 percent of deer severe winter range. 20 percent of deer summer range. 20 percent of deer winter concentration area. 10 percent of deer severe winter range/winter concentration area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 percent of deer winter range. 25 percent of deer severe winter range. 25 percent of deer summer range. 25 percent of deer winter concentration area. 20 percent of deer severe winter range/winter concentration area.
Buffers – The acreage considered for acute and collective thresholds includes the actual acreage of physical disturbance, plus this buffer around the actual surface disturbance.	660 feet on winter ranges 1,300 feet on summer ranges	660 feet on all seasonal ranges